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LETTER DATED 13 FEBRUARY 1997 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF UKRAINE TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

This morning I was informed by the United Nations Secretariat that one of the hostages taken by the armed group of commander Bakhrom Sodirov in Tajikistan, the Ukrainian national Major Valentyn Kurzhos, had been treacherously killed by his captors.

For the first time in recent United Nations history one of the parties to the conflict deliberately and in cold blood executed its captive, a representative of United Nations personnel who was unlawfully taken hostage, in order to attain their goals. My Government sees this barbaric murder as an act of terrorism that demands strong and resolute reaction on the part of the international community. The perpetrators of this heinous crime should not go unpunished.

This tragic event has once again proved the importance and urgent need to expedite the entry into force of the Convention on the Safety of the United Nations and Associated Personnel, adopted by the General Assembly in December 1994 and now opened for ratification, acceptance, approval or accession.

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to ask you urgently to convene a meeting of the Security Council, which, we expect, must give an adequate response to the perfidious murder of the United Nations military observer and inhuman acts towards the hostages taken in Tajikistan.

We believe that the Security Council should strongly condemn this murder and the acts of violence, including hostage-taking, and harassment of personnel of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) and emphasize the responsibility of all parties in Tajikistan, including the Tajik Government, for the safety and security of UNMOT personnel.

The Security Council should call upon the Secretary-General to submit proposals on any measures which could be taken to prevent attacks against UNMOT and its personnel and allow it to perform its mission effectively.

(Signed) Anatoli M. ZLENKO
Ambassador
Permanent Representative